



# FOREIGN POLICY bulletin

AN ANALYSIS OF CURRENT INTERNATIONAL EVENTS

VOLUME XXXI NUMBER 10

## Negotiating with the Russians

by Philip E. Mosely

What is it like to negotiate with the Soviet representatives? Can a common language be found? When are negotiations fruitful and when impossible? In a collection of ten case-studies eleven American negotiators have set down a record of their experiences, which has been published under the auspices of the World Peace Foundation in a book entitled *Negotiating with the Russians*, edited by Raymond Dennett and Joseph E. Johnson.

The Soviet negotiators, all the contributors to this volume agree, are stubborn to deal with, cling fanatically to literal instructions and are extremely reluctant to report to Moscow their inability to secure acceptance of the full Soviet position. Even when their American counterparts were working day and night to push through lend-lease deliveries on a tremendous scale, Soviet officers took no account of practical difficulties and insisted on an exact fulfillment of instructions, drawn up in Moscow, for unloading and reloading cargoes. When, however, exasperated lend-lease officials refused to take orders, the Russian representatives usually gave in, only to make some new demand with equal insistence on the next occasion.

As General John R. Deane reports from his experiences, it proved impossible to secure fulfillment, on the Soviet side, of the Yalta agreement for the care of American and other Western prisoners-of-war overrun by the advancing Soviet forces. All promises which had been made for facilitating the protection and removal of Allied prisoners remained a dead letter, and American soldiers were forced to make their way as best they could to Odessa, where some effort was undertaken to provide relief for their needs. And this at a time when the wartime alliance was at its peak of effectiveness.

All the accounts, dealing with wartime or postwar negotiations, stress the difficulty of the Russians in understanding assumptions or approaches which differ from their own. In long negotiations for the care and repatriation of refugees and displaced persons Dr. E. F. Penrose found that the Soviet negotiators could not understand the assumption that refugees should have an option in the question of returning to their homelands. They felt that refugees belonged to the government which was in control of their homelands and should be compelled to return home or, at

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the very least, should be deprived of all support if they refused to do so. In the negotiations for the establishment of the Nuremberg tribunal the Soviet negotiator was steadfast in refusing to allow the judges to determine by trial and evidence whether the Nazi leaders had been engaged in a conspiracy to commit aggression.

### Flexibility Essential

The American negotiators found that it was possible to negotiate successfully only when the American position was strong. Japan and the Balkans are two cases in point. The Ethridge mission of 1945 to Bulgaria and Rumania, described by Mark Ethridge and Cyril E. Black, in the end merely documented the relentless advance of the Soviet-sponsored regimes to absolute power over their protesting peoples. Appeals to Allied unity and to the Yalta agreements were met with scorn or sophistry. On the other hand, Soviet methods of dealing with the Balkan satellites were important in shaping the Allied agreement of December 1945 for control over Japan. Here the shoe was on the other foot, for Molotov was stuck with his own argument that Russia's position in the Allied control machinery for Japan should be like that of the United States in the Balkan control commissions. Because the Soviet government had no part in occupying Japan it failed in its bid, which it had pressed hard, for a veto over United States policy in Japan.

While all these chroniclers agree that it is essential to enter into negotiation with a clear United States

position and with a firm determination to sit long and argue late, it is not necessarily helpful to begin negotiations on a "take-it-or-leave-it" basis. In the light of later knowledge it is probable, as Frederick Osborn concludes, that the Soviet government would never have accepted an international agreement on control of atomic energy which included either international ownership, an effective system of international inspection, or abandonment of the veto in punishing violations. It can be argued, however, that it would have been worth attempting a more flexible opening gambit, instead of presenting a completely elaborated project already approved by the principal Western powers. An alternative procedure would have been to explore, one by one, the problems involved in controlling and utilizing this unique form of power, drawing stage-by-stage the conclusions to which such a joint study might lead. The final American position would certainly have been basically similar, but the chances of finding some common basis of negotiation would have been slightly improved.

### Negotiating from Strength

Although the various accounts of their experience in negotiation were written separately, all the authors agree that it is useless to reach general agreements "in principle." Agreements with the Soviet government should be clear, down to the last detail. Promises to promote "democracy" or to further "cooperation" are bound to be interpreted by Soviet leaders in accordance with

their own logic and habits of thought. The authors also agree that "good will" is not a sufficient basis for assuring the carrying out of agreements. Each agreement, if it is to be effective, must contain "built-in guarantees" for enforcing its fulfillment. They also point to the need in each negotiation of discovering a direct Soviet interest in reaching an accord. When there was no such interest to be served, the Soviet leaders showed no interest in attempting to negotiate merely for the sake of good feeling or Allied unity.

### Role of Negotiation

Finally, back of each partially successful or relatively satisfactory negotiation there was both a clearly defined American policy and a reality of American strength. If these conditions are met in the future, most of the authors feel, negotiation has a limited but essential role in Soviet-American relations. No single negotiator and no single effort at a settlement can be expected to bring about a fundamental relaxation of the Soviet leaders' ambition to expand their power and their ideology, but the policy of preparing to negotiate from "positions of strength" implies that when and as those positions are built, the opportunity to settle particular problems through negotiations will be enhanced and should be grasped.

(Philip E. Mosely, since 1946 professor of international relations at the Russian Institute of Columbia University, was a member of the United States delegations to the Moscow conference of 1943, the Potsdam conference of 1945 and the Council of Foreign Ministers in 1945-46.)

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## Bowles Innovations in India

In three months United States Ambassador Chester Bowles in New Delhi, serving on his first diplomatic assignment, has given American foreign policy a positive quality in India that it lacks in some other countries. His influence is manifest in the agreement, signed on January 5, by which the United States and India undertake to set up a fund for the improvement of the latter's economy, primarily to increase the production of food on India's farms. The United States is to contribute \$50 million to the fund, and India is to match that amount in rupees.

What sets the arrangement apart from the aid policy the United States sometimes follows elsewhere is that the agreement puts the emphasis on help to India for that country's benefit rather than on its opposition to the U.S.S.R. This approach, by inculcating trust in the United States, is likely in time to strengthen America in its conflict with the Soviet Union more effectively than the policy, for example, of military aid to Thailand, which may soon be copied in Spain and Egypt.

### The Bowles Agreement

The Bowles agreement is an experiment in serving the American national interest by unselfishness in Asia. Despite the gift of grain which the United States made to India last spring, the official tendency before Mr. Bowles became ambassador was to follow the line that once India had shown itself worthy of our help, the help would be forthcoming; whereas the new attitude is that a nation which needs help deserves help. As a result, the words of the agreement seem to mean what they

say. In the preamble India and the United States assert that "individual liberty, free institutions, and independence on the one hand, and sound economic conditions and stable international relations on the other hand are mutually interdependent."

Most official American statements about foreign policy contain references to freedom, but the words do not always fit the act so neatly as they do in the Indian agreement. The ruling military clique in Thailand, by contrast, actually represses individual freedom. At the instigation of Congress and the Defense Department, the Truman Administration is getting ready to help the Franco government, which follows a policy of absolutism that, in the opinion of spokesmen for the Catholic Church in Spain as well as of other Spaniards, is inimical to freedom.

As a device for winning Egyptian support for the Middle East Defense Command, the State Department has been considering the question whether the United States should support Egypt's claim to sole sovereignty over the Sudan, which it governs jointly now with the British. Such support would only create new sources of strain in the tense Middle East. The Sudanese agitate for freedom from all foreign masters, not so as to trade in freedom from the British for subjugation by Egypt. Such compromises with America's desire to act as defender of freedom arise from the belief that Thailand, Spain and Egypt are strategically vital to the survival of the free nations from attack by the U.S.S.R.

The Bowles policy, however, may not succeed if its financing is limited to \$50 million. Improvement of the food supply for 350 million Indians presents monumental problems. Current food production is so inadequate that India spends about \$200 million in foreign exchange each year to import food. The diet provided by available food is insufficient. Crop failures in India are common. The near famine last summer in Bihar followed soon after the shortages which Madras and Mysore suffered in 1946 and Bombay experienced in 1949.

### India's Needs

India has launched projects for adding to its tillable land by reclamation in the Punjab, Orissa, Bengal and Bihar. A planning commission recommended last year that the government encourage Indian peasants to increase production on the land already tillable. Since 90 per cent of the Indian population is rural, the economic fate of the peasants may in time determine the political fate of the country.

Hitherto the United States has been reluctant to spend adequate amounts on the kind of technical aid that India needs in order to improve its agriculture, but President Truman told Congress in his message on the State of the Union on January 9 that "we need more funds" for Point Four undertakings (like the Indian program) "because there is nothing of greater importance in all our foreign policy." If Congress accepts the President's view, the experiment of Ambassador Bowles will be invigorated.

BLAIR BOLLES



## Can West Hold Indo-China?

The fall on January 7 of the French cabinet headed by Premier René Pleven—the twelfth cabinet since V-E Day—and the death in a Paris clinic on January 11 of General Jean de Lattre de Tassigny, who had vigorously pressed the campaign in Indo-China against the guerrilla troops of Communist leader Ho Chi Minh, have accentuated the mounting anxiety felt in France over the Indo-Chinese situation. This anxiety comes at a critical moment, amid reports that the 250,000 Chinese Communist forces said to be deployed along the northern border of Indo-China might intervene militarily in support of Ho Chi Minh if and when a truce is concluded in Korea.

### No End in Sight

The Indo-Chinese campaign, so far regarded as a “colonial” war, has been dragging on since December 1946, a year after France recaptured control of its former colony in South-east Asia from the Japanese. This campaign has proved an increasingly serious drain on France’s still limited military resources, particularly its officer group, as well as on its finances and has brought mourning to thousands of French families.

Now that France is being called upon by Washington to take an increasingly active part in the military and economic commitments of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, not only the Socialists, who have long opposed continuation of the Indo-Chinese campaign, but even conservative leaders are openly talking about the possibility of an armistice with Ho Chi Minh to stop the hemorrhage of France’s strength be-

fore it proves too late. The most explicit statement of all on this point was made by French Foreign Minister Robert Schuman on January 6, the eve of the cabinet’s downfall, when he said:

“In Indo-China our policy is not in the least concerned with imperialism or with conquest. Without abandoning French interests or those of the associated powers [Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia] who have given us their confidence, and without wishing to open doors to communism, we would not refuse an accord which would put an end to that conflict under conditions which would be honorable for France.”

Some Americans have complained that the French did not make an adequate contribution to the United Nations forces in Korea. The French, in reply, point out that they are holding a sector against communism in Asia at least as important as Korea; that until a year ago when they began to receive equipment, but no men, from the United States they had done this alone; and that if the Indo-Chinese campaign is regarded as essential by the anti-Communist coalition, then other Western powers should share more equitably the burdens now borne by France. British Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden, speaking at Columbia University on January 11, said that “the intervention by force by Chinese Communists in Southeast Asia—even if they were called volunteers—would create a situation no less menacing than that which the United Nations met and faced in Korea. In any such event the United Nations should be equally solid to resist it.” Hitherto, however, the French have been re-

luctant to submit the Indo-Chinese conflict to the UN, where Asian and Arab countries known for their opposition to colonialism are represented.

### Could UN Intervene?

Under the circumstances the French would probably prefer to have the United States and Britain render such military aid as may be needed in Indo-China rather than place their own forces under UN sponsorship, on the model of what has been done in Korea. A top-secret conference of French, British and American military leaders was held at the Pentagon the weekend of January 11 to discuss the action the Big Three might take in case of direct intervention by Communist China in the Indo-Chinese conflict.

Britain, however, is itself tied up in a desperate struggle against guerrillas in Malaya. If France is to be reinforced in Indo-China, the United States would have to undertake the task, and this possibly at a time when American troops cannot yet be withdrawn from Korea. At the close of the Pentagon conference General Alphonse-Pierre Juin, inspector general of the French Army, said that he had asked the United States not for ground forces but for air and naval units in the event of a Chinese assault. The alternative proposed by M. Schuman, whose allegiance to the anti-Communist coalition is beyond cavil, of armistice negotiations with Ho Chi Minh may appear to some Americans as a retreat from the anti-Communist front in Asia. The French view, however, is that if the West can parley with Com-

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## The Philippine Economy

by Shirley Jenkins

Mrs. Jenkins was formerly political officer in the Far East Section, Department of Security Council Affairs, United Nations, and associate editor of the *Far Eastern Survey*. The American Institute of Pacific Relations will soon publish a volume by Mrs. Jenkins on American economic policy toward the Philippines.

In spite of violence and bloodshed, the November 1951 elections in the Philippines reflected a strong popular will for good government and improved administration. Although this was not a presidential contest, the overwhelming victory of the *Nacionalista* Senatorial and Provincial candidates over their Liberal opponents has challenged the Liberal party regime of President Elpidio Quirino on many fronts. Not the least of these is the economic front, where serious weaknesses have long been apparent.

It is now over a year since the Bell mission found the Philippine economy "deteriorating" and the Filipino people "disillusioned." During the intervening period the Philippine legislature has passed certain measures regulating wages and taxes, specified by the Bell mission as a prerequisite for further United States assistance. As a temporary measure an interim program of American aid on a project basis has been initiated. Trade and fiscal controls, however, have been applied to the symptoms rather than to the causes of economic disorder. A permanent solution in the Philippines, according to the Bell mission, will require a determined effort "to increase production and improve productive efficiency, to raise the level of wages and farm income, and to open new opportunities for acquiring land."

Part of the background of the present Philippine-United States relationship is the fact that our decision to grant independence to the Philippine Islands, expressed in the

Tydings-McDuffie Act of 1934, was a product of mixed motives in the United States, among them the desire of American producers of sugar and fats to avoid competition with Philippine products. After World War II the situation was further complicated by American business groups interested in fuller participation in Philippine industry and commerce. The Philippine Trade Act of 1946, introduced by Representative C. Jasper Bell and referred to as the Bell Act, sought to satisfy the varying interests. Reciprocal free trade was to continue until 1954, followed by a 20-year period of gradually increasing duties; quotas were set for certain Philippine exports to the United States such as cordage, tobacco and coconut oil; and a parity provision was included which gave American business equal rights with Filipinos in the use of Philippine natural resources (a provision which necessitated amendment of the Philippine constitution). In addition the peso was tied to the dollar at the rate of two to one, and changes in the Philippine exchange rate were forbidden without the approval of the President of the United States.

### Postwar Maladjustments

The postwar cushion of about \$2 billion direct and indirect American expenditures in the Philippines, including some \$538 million for war-damage claims and rehabilitation of certain government facilities, provided a unique but substantially wasted opportunity for Philippine financial adjustment. After six years

the Philippine Republic remains heavily dependent on American help to prop up its unstable economy.

In addition to trade and finances, political and social difficulties have also had important effects on the economic structure of the Philippines. Following World War II the return to high official positions of a number of individuals who had collaborated with the Japanese caused confusion and disillusionment. Widespread graft and corruption, while not a phenomenon unique to the Philippines, became a mounting problem.

This was apparent in the hotly disputed presidential elections of 1949 in which the contestants were the incumbent, Elpidio Quirino, of the Liberal party; José Avelino, former Senate president ousted for corruption, running on an opposition Liberal slate; and José Laurel, who had been puppet president under the Japanese, campaigning as a *Nacionalista*. After the announcement of the Quirino victory, *U.S. News and World Report* of November 18, 1949 commented, "Election-day violence killed scores and injured hundreds. The official results, at best, are a dubious expression of public opinion."

The postelection period also seemed to mark a new phase in the activities of the Communist-led Hukbalahap, which had originally been organized as an anti-Japanese guerrilla force and had secured control of large land areas during the occupation. In the early postwar years the Huks emphasized land reform and elected representatives to Con-

gress. Efforts to have them surrender their arms proved unsuccessful, however, and sporadic fighting continued. After the 1949 election the Huks, renamed the Philippine People's Liberation Army, called for the outright overthrow of the Quirino administration, and the campaign for their suppression was accelerated by the Philippine government.

In addition to political and social difficulties, the election period was marked by an intensification of postwar economic problems. Loss of confidence in the government was indicated by the sharp drop in foreign exchange reserves and the mounting budgetary deficits.

Early in 1950 the Philippines tried to fend off the approaching crisis by legislative measures. Most important of these was a drastic import-control law passed in December 1949, which reduced nonessential imports substantially but also had the unfortunate effect of further limiting available goods and thus contributing to the inflation. Domestic production was not geared to take up the slack; elaborate postwar plans or industrial development had not as yet been implemented.

### Bell Report

As the political crisis in the Far East deepened, American officials became increasingly aware that Philippine instability would lessen the value of the Republic as an Asian ally. In July of that year President Harry S. Truman dispatched an Economic Survey Mission of five to the Islands, headed by Daniel Bell, former Undersecretary of the Treasury, assisted by a staff of 24, to study conditions and advise on American policy. The Bell report, issued on October 9, 1950, pulled few punches. Its summary states: "The basic economic problem in the Philippines is inefficient production and very low

incomes. While a substantial recovery was made in production after liberation, agricultural and industrial output is still below the prewar level. In the past ten years, however, the population has increased by 25 per cent. . . .

"The inequalities in income in the Philippines, always large, have become even greater during the past few years. While the standard of living of the mass of people has not reached the prewar level, the profits of businessmen and the incomes of large landowners have risen very considerably."

The Bell report went on to document various aspects of the Philippine economy. On the whole it was cautious in recommending large-scale development programs, urging instead better use of existing facilities. A specific proposal was made for American aid on a project basis, up to the sum of \$250 million, to be conditional on certain acts of the Philippine legislature.

One of the major criteria for further aid was an improvement in the fiscal position of the Philippine government, through increased taxes, a special emergency two-year levy of 25 per cent on imports (except on certain items such as rice, corn, flour and fertilizers), and a tax of 25 per cent on exchange remittances. Minimum wage legislation of approximately one dollar a day for agricultural workers was proposed. In addition certain provisions of the Philippine Trade Act of 1946 (the Bell Act), including those relating to quotas, parity and fiscal ties, were critically reviewed, and the rediscussion and possible modification of the Act were suggested.

The specific proposal on aid which caused most controversy in the Philippines was the emphasis on American supervision, which was stressed by the Bell mission in the hope that

further dissipation of payments would be avoided. Philippine official circles as well as outspoken nationalists, however, feared infringement on the sovereignty of the Philippines. Other Filipino critics of the Bell report noted a lack of historical and political perspective. The economist Salvador Araneta, in a memorandum prepared for President Quirino, commented, "Perhaps what the Bell mission has failed to realize or appreciate fully are the fundamental difficulties of a new independent government. Largely shaped and conditioned by the demands and responsibilities of a colonial system, the new government has to face the pressing challenge of reorganization and reorientation to the problems and difficulties of an independent, sovereign country."

### Supervised Aid

In spite of opposition from varied sources, the Philippine officials preferred aid with supervision to no aid at all, and in an agreement between President Quirino and William C. Foster, then Deputy Director of the Economic Cooperation Administration, the Philippines promised to inaugurate the required wage and tax legislation, while the American authorities were to recommend congressional aid appropriations.

Action in the Philippines was delayed, however, partly because of real opposition to the legislation and partly because of a political impasse early in 1951. A new "Democratic Bloc" was formed, composed of the old *Nacionalistas*, the Avelino Liberals and the Independents, and this bloc assumed a majority position in the Senate, rendering impotent the once powerful Quirino supporters. The bloc was negative in character in that it lacked a program of its own. Finally, in April 1951, agreement was reached on wages and



taxes. The sum of 87.5 cents a day was set as the minimum wage for agricultural labor, to be increased to \$1.25 after two years. Basic pay for industrial workers was set at \$1.50 a day outside Manila and \$2 a day in the city.

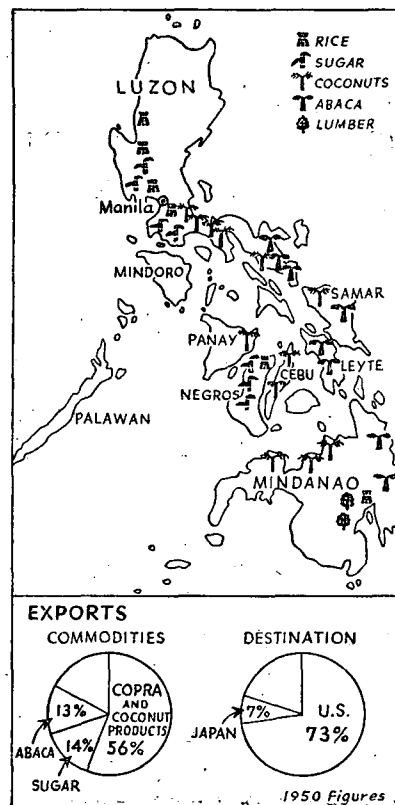
Shortly after the Bell recommendations a notable improvement took place in the Philippine financial position. Foreign exchange reserves rose, and the balance of trade in the first five months of the year became favorable, with exports of \$205 million and imports of \$150 million. These early gains, however, led to undue optimism on the part of Philippine officials. At the end of May President Quirino decontrolled a sizeable list of essential commodities, including foodstuffs, medicines, textiles and building materials. The huge orders from importers which piled up in the first half of 1951, amounting to some \$485 million, exceeded the total for the whole year 1950. Although procurement difficulties slowed down deliveries, this import rush again threatened the newly salvaged Philippine trade and fiscal position.

One area where the Filipinos feel strongly that their economic interests have been blocked is with regard to wartime reparations payments, and dissatisfaction was voiced with the Japanese peace treaty, partly because the Filipino \$8 billion reparations claim had not been met. The official Philippine position reflects continuing bitter anti-Japanese feeling in the Islands and resentment against the revitalization of the former enemy's economy.

In addition to financial and trade problems, rural unrest in the Philippines has grown, and Huk forces, although dispersed, remain an important factor in the countryside. The Philippine government has acted vigorously against the opposition. In Manila six members of the

Philippine Communist party, including one woman, were sentenced to death last spring, nine to life imprisonment, and nine others given varying jail terms. Both Huk and anti-Huk activities continue. In July 1951 Acting President of the Philippines Senate Quintin Paredes stated that the Philippine Army was holding some 2,000 persons suspected as

### Philippine Economic Resources



subversives. At the same time the attendant limitations on civil liberties have aroused criticism from independent leaders such as Senator Lorenzo Tañada of the Citizen's party, well-known Filipino legislator.

The next few months will indicate whether the election shake-up will result in more than superficial changes in the Philippine picture. The country, however, has a long way to go to achieve real stability or resolution of its basic problems. A

new note in Philippine politics has been injected by Justice Claro M. Recto, who has criticized dependence on the United States, and has called for an independent nationalism in Asia along the lines of India's position. Meanwhile, the mutual defense agreement between the Philippines and the United States, announced on August 16, 1951, reasserts existing arrangements on bases and pledges, within the framework of the United Nations, and calls for mutual defense in the event of armed attack on either party.

Future political trends in the Philippines will be strongly influenced by world-wide and particularly by Asian developments. In the economic sphere it is safe to predict that while external project-aid can give vigor to a weak economy, it cannot be a substitute for an internal development program which would cope with the needs of the country as a whole, both public and private. Such a plan could offer a consistent approach rather than sporadic aid whenever trade balances fall or exchange receipts mount. The Bell report concludes that even so comprehensive a program as it suggests can only "provide an environment in which the people of the Philippines can work out a reasonable solution of their problems." In initiating its plan for project aid the United States has taken a new tack in the Philippines; but it has a difficult course to steer, and the currents it must buck are strong.

**READING SUGGESTIONS:** David Bernstein, *The Philippine Story* (New York, Farrar, Straus, 1947); Joseph Ralston Hayden, *The Philippines: A Study in National Development* (New York, Macmillan, 1942); Manuel Quezon, *The Good Fight* (New York, D. Appleton-Century, 1946); *Report and Recommendations of the Joint Philippine-American Finance Commission* (Washington, Government Printing Office, 1947); *Report to the President of the United States by the Economic Survey Mission to the Philippines* (Washington, Government Printing Office, 1950).

## As Others See Us

The role of the United States in Indo-China has been widely discussed in the French press. In *Le Figaro* of December 31 Pierre Brisson, the editor of this independent, moderately conservative newspaper, expressed the following views which are believed to have been government-inspired: "Like Korea, Indo-China is but a phase of the struggle of the free nations. But in Indo-China, in the face of the same enemy, France is alone. . . . If the United States believes that there might be danger for the West in allowing the Red wave to sweep across Asia, its urgent duty is to warn Peking that any intervention of Chinese 'volunteers' in Indo-China and any military support by Mao's government would automatically bring about the internationalization of the conflict and American retaliation."

*Franc-Tireur*, anti-Communist organ of the left, which has long advocated liquidation of the war in Indo-China, said on December 29: "It is obvious that even aside from financial considerations it has become impossible to wage war in Indo-China and assure the defense of continental Europe at the same time. . . . Let

no one come up with stories of our international commitments. It was our government that wanted to draw the United States into the Indo-Chinese mess. It can enlist American help to get us out, therefore, but for that it must be willing to grant total independence to Vietnam while trying to prevent the country from falling into the hands of the Kremlin."

In an editorial of December 20 on "American Bureaucrats," the British

liberal organ, *The Manchester Guardian Weekly*, welcomes the news that the State Department "is at last realizing the damage that is being done by the capricious restrictions placed on the visits of eminent Europeans to the United States." It concludes: "This kind of bureaucratic ignorance and illiberalism makes nonsense of all the elaborate propaganda about 'freedom' and the rest that the United States is now pouring on us so lavishly."

### Spotlight

(Continued from page 4)

munists in Korea it should not dismiss the possibility of negotiating with Communists in Indo-China.

Nationalism in Southeast Asia was in process of formation long before communism made its appearance in that area and was, in fact, an inevitable result of colonization by the Western powers, which promised ultimate independence to their subjects and thus prepared the way for the eventual self-liquidation of their empires. Since the Japanese conquest, which revealed the military weakness of the West in Asia, Communist propaganda has had a powerful influence on native nationalism. Even more powerful has been the recent impact of Communist China, a next-door neighbor, on the plural societies of Indo-China. Ma-

laya and relatively sheltered Thailand, where large Chinese populations are affected by events in their homeland.

As a result of this combination of forces, Asia is rapidly returning to the Asians. Whether or not a different policy on the part of the Western colonial powers could have altered the course of events is now a question for historians. The immediate problem is whether military intervention by the United States in Indo-China would rally Asians to resist communism or would enhance the impression in Asia that the American people, hitherto favorably known for its tradition of anti-colonialism, intends to take over colonial responsibilities some French leaders are ready to relinquish.

VERA MICHELES-DEAN

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